

Unit



Prepare for Providing Customer Service

In this Unit, the students will be able to learn about the various preparations need to be done before providing services to the customer. First session of this Unit explains about the various advantages of booking with travel agents of an agency, the information of the clients required for booking and booking of the tour components.

Second session of this Unit explains about the importance of following duty rosters. This session also discusses about the tourists and their various needs. Apart from these, this session also talks about the various travel documents required by the tourists.

Special requirements of customers on arrival and simple communication during the process is also discussed in this session.

SESSION 1: PREPARE FOR PROVIDING CUSTOMER SERVICE (MEET AND GREET)

The first meeting with the customer must be impressive and hospitable which reflects the image of the company. The Customer Service Executive of the travel companies has the responsibility to reflect the company's brand value. So, before meeting the client, prior planning and preparation needs to be done at the terminal or an

agreed place, including coordinating with the co-service providers, such as airport staff, drivers, accommodation providers, superior and team members for a smooth transfer of guests.

Importance of travel booking

Travellers have the option of researching and booking everything they need online or with the help of a travel agency. With the availability of the internet facilities, online booking has become very easy but most of the people consider booking various tours with the help of a particular agency or agent.

Advantages of travel booking with travel agents of an agency

1. Travel agents deliver all the information related to the tour.
2. Travel agents are able to offer various packages with different combinations, with all inclusive prices. Customers need not pay any additional amount for the services offered.
3. Travel Agents offer affordable payment options, even of a small deposit at the time of booking and giving the remaining amount within an agreed duration of time, while most online booking sites demand instant payment to confirm a booking.
4. Travel agents act as trouble-shooters and offer help at the time of unexpected incidents during the tour. They are with the client on every step. They may fix situations with the help of their contacts at the place visited.
5. In case of travel insurance claim or any need to follow up on any complaint of the client after tour, the travel agent helps and continues to work on behalf of the client. They make sure to solve the problems on time.

During the process of booking, the reservation staff of a tour company receives the client and resolves all their queries. After the resolution of the query, the

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booking forms need to be filled by the customers and the deposit sent together with the booking form to the travel agency.

Once the form and deposit have been received by the clients, the confirmation is sent after receiving the payments. Thereafter bookings are made with the operator or the suppliers, such as transport, hotels and ground operators, etc., in the name of the clients.

Information required from the clients for booking

While each tour wholesaler may implement his or her own system, the information needed from clients generally remains the same. Similarly, information that has to be sent to the agents or clients from the tour operator is generally the same. The information needed from the clients:

- destination
- preferred date of travel
- holiday duration
- departure point
- number of passengers
- type of accommodation that is required
- traveller's name

Booking of the tour components

Travel Agents, Tour Managers or Travel Consultants book travel components either as a single product like air or rail tickets, hotel rooms, renting transport, etc., on Travel Agent's Commission (TAC) for their clients or as composite of package tour. Some clients ask only for a single travel product, but these days, clients ask for the entire tour packages to be booked for them. Tour packages can be GIT (Group Inclusive Tour), FIT (Free- Independent Traveller), all inclusive and Escorted Tours prepared on different themes like Heritage Tours, Cultural Tours, Wildlife Tours, Adventure Sports Tours, etc.

The following travel components are booked by travel companies:



Hotel rooms

Booking accommodation, dealing with the different kinds of accommodation options, and considering alternative lodging options are some issues that the travellers need assistance with. Tourism markets are seasonal and hotels at popular tourist destinations are sold out in peak season from September to March, when finding good accommodation can be one of the most frustrating aspects of travel planning. There are two ways to solve the hotel room booking problem:

- booking in advance or
- finding a place on the day of arrival

Booking in advance

Booking in advance gives the traveller peace of mind. It is also a good idea while travelling to a popular tourist destination so as not to pay higher prices or waste time and energy looking for a place to stay.

Methods of booking a hotel room

There are various modes of booking the hotel rooms which are used by the travel companies. These are described as follows:

This can be done in a number of ways:

- over the internet
- through a travel agent
- over telephone

Booking Over the Internet

(a) Online: The travellers themselves can book accommodation online either at the hotel's website or at the website of an agency or ask a travel company to do it. Some hotel rooms can be booked by reservation systems, like CRS (Computer Reservation System) and GDS (Global Distribution System). Some travel companies design their own travel portal linked to the hotels on which travellers can book their rooms online and pay online too. Payment on these sites can be done through a variety of paying methods including net banking, debit cards, credit cards, and other online transaction methods.

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(b) Email: For booking by email, the steps would be more or less the same as those for online booking.

- First, ask whether the customer's dates are available; ask for updated prices.
- Inquire about the customer's preferred rooms and other essential details.
- Ask to reserve the customer dates.
- Ask for confirmation from the customer embassy; provide all the personal details (passport details of every visitor, etc.) that they may need to issue the confirmation.
- In the end, ask for cancellation policy, directions to the hotel and other significant details.

Booking over Telephone

Most travel agencies have liaison with the hoteliers for booking hotel rooms on discounted prices. The Tour Manager often negotiates for the best lodging rates by calling the travel suppliers directly instead of the Salesperson of the hotel, which provides the best opportunity to negotiate discounts and ask about specials schemes (advertised and unadvertised).

Booking through a Travel Agent

(a) On Spot Booking: If any traveller plans the travel himself and not use a package from a Travel Agent, sometimes finding accommodation on arrival at the destination or the hotel may be difficult. In this situation, the hotel may provide accommodation on enhanced rates.

(b) Airline, rail and bus tickets: A single tourism product or a composite tourism package can also be booked through travel companies. A single tourism product can be travel tickets or transportation at the visiting place, accommodation in a hotel or booking for sightseeing. A tour package would include multiple facilities involved in travelling.

International Air Transport Association (IATA) approved travel companies are authorised to book, hold and sell airline tickets to their clients. By booking on behalf of the clients, they get the commission or



incentives from the General Sales Agent (GSA). Rail tickets can be booked from the IRCTC website or any other website of any travel company online. Travel by bus or taxi can also be booked in advance through a travel company or State Tourism websites.

(c) Rent a tourist transport: There are many car rental companies in India which offer vehicles to tourists for independent tours. Travel and tourism companies hire these tourist vehicles from Car Rental Companies as per the requirement of the tourists and offer them either as inclusive with the package or as a single tourism product for local sightseeing. Many travel and tour companies include Car-Rental Service in the tour package.

A Tour Operation Manager or Customer Service Executive of a travel company needs to follow the following procedure for booking a car for its clients:

- Making a checklist before the guest arrival, including details, such as name, flight details and itinerary from the tour operation department of the company.
- Liaison with the car-rental company for renting a car as required by the tourist and mentioned in the tourist's itinerary.
- Set the rate and date as per the company policy.
- Send an e-mail of the current booking of the tourist.

Done

Cleartrip Flight E-Ticket.pdf

ticket

Trip ID : XXXX

cleartrip

Siem Reap to Phnom Penh

Cambodia Angkor Air

KG-106

REP 14:10

Wed, 03 Jan 2018

Siem Reap - Siem Reap Terminal 1

15:05 PNH

Wed, 03 Jan 2018

Phnom Penh - Pochantong

55m

Economy

Baggage info - Check-in: 20 KG, Cabin: 7 KG

TRAVELLERS	AIRLINE PNR	TICKET NO.
XXXX	XXXX	1234

TIP: Before heading out to any destination get your kids to memorize your names & slip in your business cards in their pockets.

ABOUT THIS TRIP

- Use your Trip ID for all communication with Cleartrip about this booking
- Check-in counters for international flights close 90 minutes before departure
- Your carry-on baggage shouldn't weigh more than 7kgs
- Carry photo identification, you will need it as proof of identity while checking-in
- Kindly ensure that you have the relevant visa, immigration clearance and travel with a passport, with a validity of at least 6 months.
- For hassle free refund processing, cancel/amend your tickets with Cleartrip Customer Care instead of doing so directly with Airline.

FARE BREAKUP

Base fare:	Rs. 5,202
Taxes and fees:	Rs. 2,979
Discounts & Cashbacks:	Rs. -200
Total fare:	Rs. 7,981

Cleartrip support

(+91) 95 95 333 333

Cambodia Angkor Air helpline

(855) 23 6666 786

Need a hotel?

(+91) 95 95 333 333

Fig. 4.1 Online ticket Booking

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- Re-confirm the booking before the arrival of the guest.
- Co-ordinate with the company owner for getting the vehicle number and driver contact number at the day of guest arrival.
- Go with the driver, meet, greet and receive the tourist from the arrival point (airport, railway station or bus stop).
- Escort the client or tourists to their pre-arranged hotel and inform the driver about the next step of the tour.

Practical Exercises

Activity 1

Visit any Tour Operator agency of your nearby area or city and note down the procedure of travel booking.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Visit a tour operator close to your vicinity.
- Discuss the procedure of travel booking with the working officials.
- On the basis of the collected information, prepare a report showing the procedure of travel booking.
- Discuss the report in the class.

Activity 2

Prepare a chart showing various steps of hotel booking by email and discuss in the class.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Collect the information related to hotel booking by email.
- Present the various steps of online booking on a chart paper.
- Discuss the prepared chart in the class.



Check Your Progress

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A. Multiple Choice Questions

- _____ delivers all the information related to a tour.
(a) Travel Agent
(b) Tour Guide
(c) Hotel Agent
(d) All the above
- _____ gives the traveller peace of mind that they will have somewhere to sleep once they arrive at their destination.
(a) Advance Booking
(b) Online Booking
(c) Phone Booking
(d) All of the above
- _____ can be booked from the IRCTC website.
(a) Rail tickets
(b) Bus Tickets
(c) Flight Tickets
(d) All of the above.
- CRS means _____.
(a) Computer Reservation System
(b) Centre Reservation System
(c) Control Reservation System
(d) None of the above
- TAC refers to _____.
(a) Travel Agent's Commission
(b) Tour Agent's Company
(c) Tour Arranging Company
(d) Travel Advisory Committee

B. Subjective Questions

- What are the advantages of travel booking with Travel Agents of a travel agency?
- What are the various travelling components booked by the travel companies?
- Explain the procedure of booking a car for tourists by a travel company.
- Manager or Customer Service Executive (Meet and Greet) of a travel company?
- What is 'on the spot booking'? Explain in brief.

SESSION 2: PREPARE FOR MEETING CUSTOMERS

Importance of Checking Duties As Per the Duty Roster

Rosters are prepared for a number of reasons which benefit the employers and employees. This section defines a roster and identifies the reasons of preparing and using rosters.

A roster is a list of persons' name and their work schedule. Duty rosters specify the allotment of jobs, hours of duty, and days off for each member of the staff.

Contents of duty rosters

1. Names of the staff members who are to work
2. Days of work (usually with dates)
3. Starting time
4. Break times
5. Finish time
6. Where they are to work
7. Their role

Advantages of using the duty roster

Gives information about who is on leave(annual leave or sick leave).

1. Ensures that right people, in the right number, are employed at the right place at the right time.
2. Helps in organising staff.
3. Enables the supervisor or the person preparing the roster to distribute the projected workload equally among staff and across the entire working day.
4. Guarantees that the level of service required or promised to the customer is delivered throughout the working day.
5. Helps in balancing the well experienced staff according to their importance at work.
6. It is a tool of communication that helps in communicating with the employees and informs



them about their place of requirement, time of requirement, breaks they can have during the operations, when not required and when to go home.

Name of the staff	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	22/06/XX	22/06/XX	22/06/XX	22/06/XX	22/06/XX	22/06/XX
John	07:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m.	07:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m.	07:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m.	07:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m.	OFF	SPECIAL LEAVE
Ram Narayan	06:30 a.m. to 05:30 p.m.	06:30 a.m. to 05:30 p.m.	06:30 a.m. to 05:30 p.m.	OFF	Casual Leave	06:30 a.m. to 05:30 p.m.
Seeta Mishra	OFF	07:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m.	07:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m.	06:30 a.m. to 05:30 p.m.	Casual Leave	06:30 a.m. to 05:30 p.m.

A Sample of Duty Roster Chart

Protocol for special types of customers and their special needs

Travel Organisations need to meet customer expectations and produce customer satisfaction. Good service will enhance visitors' experience and attract new and complete services. Customers can be of various types—different age groups, families, couples, singles, groups, ethnicity or culture, special interests, organised groups, etc. Apart from these, there may also be customers with special needs, for example, mobility, sensory impaired tourists.

Following is the list of some requirements by these customers:

1. Accurate information e.g., directions, facilities, price, and availability.
2. Product knowledge
3. Health related information
4. Safety and security assistance, e.g. with luggage and language
5. Advice, e.g. suitability of a destination or a flight, how to obtain a visa, in relation to solving a problem

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6. Products and services e.g., provided as per the booking or specific to a special needs tourist.

Categories of Tourists as per their needs

1. Business and professional tourists

- Business related requirements like meeting area, exhibitions and special events.
- Conference centres that cater to the needs of business tourists.
- An example of a business tourist would be a salesman who travels to another city to attend a trade show and promote the products that he sells
- Leisure and holiday tourists—scenery destination sites
- Refreshment activities
- Choice of food
- Adventurous activities
- Games

2. Tourists travelling to visit friends and relatives (VFR)

- Want to stay in contact with friends and relatives and travel away from home to visit them.
- These tourists may travel to attend a wedding, funeral, or birthday celebration of friends or relatives.

3. Health or medical tourist

- To visit a holiday spa, or needs medical special treatment that is only available away from home
- Undergo procedures that are cheaper in another country, or wish to be in a healthier climate place during convalescence. Many foreign tourists go to other countries for plastic surgery.

4. Adventure tourist

- Want an unusual and exciting experience.
- Want to participate in activities that may be



dangerous, such as rock climbing, river rafting, skydiving, shark cave diving and bungee jumping.

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5. Cultural tourist

- Want to experience different cultures, such as Surajkund *Mela* in Haryana and Dance Festival in Khajuraho.
- Want to visit the World Heritage Sites in the country.

6. Eco-tourists

- Travel to experience nature

7. Religious tourists

- Want to see and experience the places of religious importance. There are many religious destinations in the world, such as the Hajj in Mecca and Varanasi in India.

8. Shopping tourists

- Travel to shopping malls, shopping centres, factory shops, crafts market, festivals, and touring shopping routes.
- Their main purpose is to buy items.

9. Special interest tourists (SIT)

- Have particular interests, such as bird watching, food and wine, flowers, fishing, attending book fair, etc.

10. Backpacking or youth tourist

- Generally have little luggage, travel on a fixed budget, want to experience adventure and excitement, tend to travel independently, enjoy meeting other travellers, and have flexible travel schedules.
- A group of young tourists on a weekend walking tour in the mountains, or a student touring around the country by bus are examples of this group of tourists.

Creating a Tourist Profile helps in the fulfilment of the tourists' needs

This includes the given information:

- Name
- Nationality
- Age
- Contact details such as address and telephone number
- Occupation
- Need and preferences, for example, adventure, sports or education
- Specific requirements such as accommodation, transport, or food and the length of the trip, and arrival and departure date.

Travel Documentations

Carrying valid travel documents is mandatory to ensure hassle-free travel within the country and foreign countries. Processing of travel documents takes its own time and people face inordinate delay due to the technical formalities. Thus, the need of travel agents arose for making the travel more comfortable and ensuring the issue of travel documents from the competent authority for the clients or customers. Travel agents are authorised to process the necessary documents on behalf of the money exchangers, foreign consulate offices, passport offices, income tax office, insurance office, etc. Travel documentations are processed for clients and customers before their confirmation for purchasing a tour package. Travel documents include passport, visa, currency certificate or endorsement of currency in the passport, travel insurance, income tax statements, health certificates, etc.

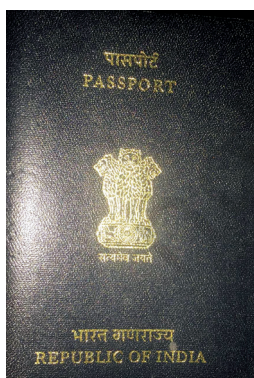


Fig. 4.2 Indian Passport

Passport

A passport is a document, issued by the national government of a country for the purpose of authenticating the identity and nationality of its citizens. It is used for obtaining visa for international travel.



The passport is given through the Consular Passport and Visa Division (CPV) of the Ministry of External Affairs.

- Regular Passport
- Official Passport
- Diplomatic Passport

1. Regular passports, in India, are issued to ordinary people to travel for vacations and business trips. Covers of such passports are either dark blue or black and contain 36 to 60 pages.
2. Official passports are issued to individuals representing the Indian government on official business. Covers of such passports are white in colour.
3. Diplomatic passports are issued to Diplomats or top ranking Government Officials and Diplomatic Couriers. These passports are maroon in colour.

Visa[illegible]

Fig. 4.3 Visa

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A foreigner coming to India requires a passport and an Indian visa. The office of High Commission decides the duration of the visa. It is the Consular Passport and Visa Division (CPV) of the Ministry of External Affairs that issues the visa to the foreigners.

Procedure to Apply for Visa

The applicant may either go in person or apply through the post. The Visa to India is applied at the High Commission of India in the country of the person who wishes to travel to India. Non-resident Indians (NRI) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) do not require a visa to enter India if they possess an Overseas Indian Citizenship (OCI) or a PIO card. This card gives them the freedom to visit India any time throughout their life. The NRIs and PIOs who do not have this OCI or PIO card, can apply for a Visa through the normal procedure.

Visa Guidelines

Following documents are required to be submitted for visa:

1. **Visa application form** must be filled correctly. Incomplete applications and applications with wrong information shall not be processed.
2. **Name and other relevant particulars** must be filled in as per the details in the passport.
3. **Passport:** It should have a minimum validity of six months on the date of application with at least two blank pages.
4. **Photographs:** Two latest identical passport size (4"x4") photographs (black and white or colour) depicting front posture against light background.
5. **Supporting documents:** The visa application should be accompanied with supporting documents on the type of visa applied for.

Visa Fee

There are different fee schedules for the amount of fee, for different type of visas. Visa fee is accepted through different payment methods as per the rules of the country for which the visa is applied.



S. No.	Category of Visa	Uses
1.	E- Visa: (A) E-Tourist Visa (B) E-Business Visa (C) E-Medical Visa	For recreation, sightseeing, casual visit to meet friends or relatives, and attending a short term yoga programme For all activities permitted under a normal Business Visa. For medical treatment, including treatment under Indian systems of medicine. A foreign national will also be permitted to club these activities provided he/she had clearly indicated the same in the application form along with requisite documents.
2.	Visa-On-Arrival	Visa-on-Arrival is granted to a Japanese national who is visiting India for business, tourism, conference and medical purposes.
3.	Transit Visa	A Transit Visa is granted to the foreigners for the sole purpose of enabling them to travel through India to a destination outside India.
4.	Tourist Visa	A Tourist Visa is granted to a foreigner whose sole objective of visiting India is recreation, sightseeing, casual visit to meet friends or relatives, attending a short term yoga programme, short duration medical treatment including treatment under Indian systems of medicine, etc., and no other purpose or activity. (Short term yoga programme means a yoga programme not exceeding six months duration and not issued with a qualifying certificate/diploma etc.)
5.	Medical Visa	A Medical Visa (MED Visa) is granted to a foreigner whose sole purpose is to seek medical treatment in established, recognised, specialised hospitals, and treatment centres in India. In case the foreign national desires to avail the treatment under the Indian systems of medicine, his/her case will also be considered.
6.	Employment Visa	Employment Visa is granted to a foreigner who is a highly skilled and/or qualified professional. Employment Visa shall not be granted for— (i) jobs for which qualified Indians are available and (ii) routine, ordinary or secretarial or clerical jobs. Employment visa is not granted to a citizen of Pakistan.
7.	Project Visa	Project Visa is granted to foreign nationals coming to India for execution of projects in the power and steel sectors,
8.	Business Visa	A Business Visa is granted to a foreigner who wishes to visit India for business purposes.

9.	Student And Research Visa	A Student Visa is granted to a foreigner whose sole objective is to pursue on-campus, full time (structured) courses (including English and other language courses and vocational education) at educational institutions (Central or State Government Educational Institutions and Private Educational Institutions) duly recognised by statutory regulatory body and have acquired statutory authorisation to conduct the course(s) complying with GST regulations.
10.	Intern Visa	Intern [I] Visa is granted to a foreigner intending to pursue internship in Indian companies, educational institutions and NGOs.
11.	Sports Visa	Grant of visa to the members of sports teams
12.	Journalist Visa	Grant to foreigner journalist professionals
13.	Film Visa	Grant for shooting of a feature film, reality TV show and/or commercial TV serials

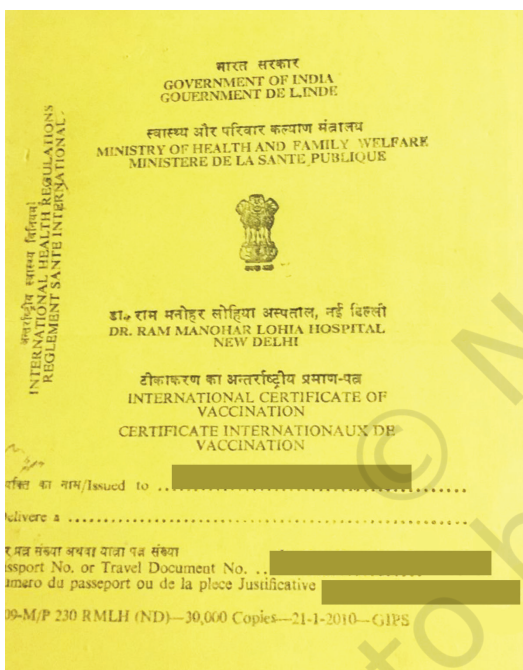


Fig. 4.4 Vaccination Certificate

Health Certificate and Currency Endorsement

Health certificates, vaccination, insurance, foreign currency and restricted area permits are also processed much before the commencement of a tour. All these formalities are managed by the travel agencies and tour operators to help customers or members of GIT and FIT travel comfortably.

Reservation Confirmation Letter for Hotel bookings

Reservation confirmation is an acknowledgement given by the hotel to the guest for their room request and also the personal details given at the time of booking. This needs to be submitted at the time of check-in process in a hotel.

Special requirements of customers on arrival and simple communication during the process

Tourists are guided with the following tips and information. These guidelines help the tourists during arrival and departure at the airport:

1. Tourists must download an airport map. This will show you the drop off points for flight



departures, as well as the internal layout of the airport.

2. They need to get to the airport at least three hours before the gate closes for the flight. Gates close about half an hour before the flight actually departs.
3. Once at the airport, look for the large screens showing the arrival and departure schedule. This will display the opening time and number of the check-in counter. Proceed there with your luggage, flight ticket, and passport.
4. At the check-in counter, tickets will be checked, luggage will be weighed, and your passport and visa (if required) will also be checked. The counter staff will ask security questions, particularly about having banned items in your bags. They will then print off a luggage label for bags, which will be moved onto a conveyor belt and taken to the flight. A little ticket is provided for the luggage and a personal boarding card from the flight. Always keep these safe with you at all times.
5. After check-in, follow the airport signs for flight departures, which will include a check on boarding card, passport, and security screening.
6. Do not take any containers of liquids in excess of 100 ml. The Checking Authority person may ask you to remove shoes and place them with the hand luggage in a plastic tray for security scanning. Place all the coins, keys, and phones in the same plastic tray.
7. Once through passport control and security, the main body of the departure terminal appears. There are screens in the terminal to tell which gate your flight leaves from, and whether or not that gate is open.
8. Every gate is assigned a number and the airport signs direct the passengers to the gate. At the gate, go towards the waiting lounge and wait for the boarding to start. Once the flight gate opens,

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- proceed to the gate. Show the passport and boarding card whenever asked for.
- Staff in the waiting lounge will announce when the passengers are to actually board the flight, usually by announcing seat row. Take a shuttle bus or walk down a sky bridge to board the airplane.
 - On entering the aircraft, show the boarding card to the staff, and they will direct you to the right section of the plane.

On Arrival

- Follow the airport signs for immigration and passport control, and from there go to the baggage hall to wait for luggage.
- There are screens in the baggage hall, which show the number of conveyor belt from where you can pick up your luggage.
- After taking the luggage, proceed to customs.
- After clearing customs, follow the signs to the arrival hall, the signs for taxis, buses, trains, etc., can be seen from there.

Practical Exercises

Activity 1

Visit any travel agency in your area and collect information about various important points to be considered while meeting and greeting a customer.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

- Visit any travel agency near your area.
- Discuss with the officials about the process to be followed for meeting and greeting the customer.
- Prepare a report and discuss in the class.

Activity 2

Prepare a chart showing various documents required for travelling and hotel booking and confirmation.



Material Required

A chart paper and writing material

Procedure

- Collect the information about various documents required for travelling and hotel booking and confirmation.
- Prepare a chart showing various documents.
- Discuss the information presented on the chart in the class.

Check Your Progress**A. Explain in one or two lines**

1. Business Visa
2. Intern Visa
3. Film Visa
4. Sports Visa
5. Journalist Visa

B. Subjective Questions

1. Explain the importance of checking duties as per duty roster.
2. Explain the various protocols for special types of customers and their special needs.
3. Explain the various travel documentations.
4. List the different types of visas.
5. What are the various special requirements of customers?
6. Explain the various requirements of customers on arrival at the airport.